Section 7.—Other Chiefs.

The following chiefs do not fit into particular branch of the heirarchy and deserve a special section. 622

(a) Chief Shimwalule.

I have dealt at length with this man in a published work (6). He is undertaker to the Royal Chiefs and perhaps should not be ranked as a chief himself. The succession is through members of the *Bena* totem and the line is disjointed as well as distinct. I need say little more here. Shimwalule should retain a salary as undertaker and priest to the royal chiefs and his area could be administered by Nkweto. 622 767

In the past a Shimwalule could only bury one Paramount although he was allowed to bury any number of the other few chiefs eligible to rest in the grove at Mwaule. He usually retired when a Paramount died after he had already buried one but there was such competition for this once valuable post that many Shimwalules were killed off by other claimants. But a tendency is now appearing for the Shimwalule to become more permanent. The last one buried Paramount Chikwanda C8 and then later showed himself willing to bury another one, Ponde C10. But he died mysteriously after receiving the body of Ponde C10 at the Chambeshi river. The present Shimwalule luckly happened (!) to be close by and he took over the ceremony. In spite of this unfortunate death the Shimwalule at the moment seems to be willing to take a risk and try to bury his second Paramount, Kanyanta D1. For he has not yet retired from his post and there is talk that the old custom may lapse.

(b) Chief Kabwibwi.

When Chileshe Chepela A2 was born with his shortened and deformed arm his mother refused to give him milk and a foster mother was found. Later, when Chileshe A2 became Paramount he made the son of his foster mother into Chief Kabwibwi and gave him a country. Descent is direct through the brothers and nephews and is another of the self contained lines. But there is a particular link with the Paramount for Kabwibwi gives one of his daughters to Chitimukulu as a wife and Chitimukulu sends one of his daughters to be a wife of Kabwibwi. 622

(c) Chief Kaliminwa.

This chief is a *lumbwe* who is always married to a daughter of Mwamba. She is known as Nakabwe and marries the commoner whom Government deal with as Chief Kaliminwa. The first Kaliminwa was an ordinary man with no connection with any chief. The second, Mutale, was his nephew who was son to Chilangwa, Chilangwa having married Kaliminwa's sister. The third, still living to-day, is also a son of Chilangwa and it is said that the tradition is now established that Kaliminwa must be a son of Chilangwa.

When a Nakabwe dies Mwamba sends another daughter, and when in the late 1920's he could only send a young girl the elder wives objected to such a young head wife and they left Kaliminwa in disgust. But they soon returned.

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food, and to protect his person and that of the sacred relics from the contagion of illness, death, or sex defilement.[1]

The ritual by which a successor to the chieftainship is converted from an ordinary individual to a ruler with almost divine powers, has a good deal of political importance. It confers authority on the priests—in this case hereditary officials (*bakabilo*) who carry it out—and gives them, as we shall see, considerable power to check the chief himself. The complete ritual by which the *umupashi* of a dead ruler is liberated to guard the land he governed, and the new heir is installed, is too complex to describe here and now. Briefly speaking, it consists of the desiccation of the body during a period of a year, from one kafir-corn harvest to the next; its burial in a special grove (with human sacrifices in the old days); and the building of a shrine on the site of the deserted capital. To make the new chief, *bakabilo* must preside at the installation of a new great wife, arrange for the sexual purification of the royal pair, and the lighting of their new sacred fire.[2] They must hand over to the heir the heirlooms (*babenye*) of which they have been in charge during the interregnum, and must finally found a new village and build again the sacred huts in which the relics are to be kept. Such a ceremonial may take eighteen months to two years and the participation of all the *bakabilo* and hereditary buriers (*bafingo*) in the case of the paramount; a lesser time and very many fewer priestly dignitaries in the case of the territorial chiefs. The secrecy and awe surrounding these ceremonies is, I believe, one of the ways by which the people's reverence for their chiefs is maintained.

(*b*) *Legal Rules of Descent and Succession.* Against this background of beliefs as to the continuity between one generation and another, the nature of descent and succession is defined exactly by legal rule. Descent in the royal family is reckoned to the time of first occupation of the country, and twenty-five to thirty Citimukulus are remembered. In the case of a territorial chief, the line of ancestors is not so long, and most are described as having been 'born in the country'. Most of the names honoured are those of men but some are those of women, and it seems that

[1] cf. my *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia* (1939), chap. xvii.

[2] Hence the importance of the great wife of the chief (*umukolo wa calo*) in the political life of the tribe and the belief that her behaviour also influences the welfare of the land.

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611 622 643 the first ancestress to inhabit a new chiefdom, or one who was a mother of numerous powerful sons and was thus able to found a new branch, could claim to be so respected.[1] But it is to the men holders of titles that most shrines are built.

[645] [767] The hereditary officials (*bakabilo*) also trace their descent to the first arrival for the most part, and tell stories which account for their right to the ritual offices they hold to-day, e.g. the *bafingo* who now bury the chief, claim to be the descendants of those who buried the first Citimukulus when on the march. This reckoning of descent to a definite epoch in history very clearly remembered is of service in maintaining the myth of absolute continuity of the chiefly lines. In actual fact, the present Citimukulu is a descendant of one Cileshye, who seized the throne from the occupier, Cincinta, only four generations back. This branch of usurpers is able to claim descent from the first Citimukulu all the same. The first ancestors are remembered very accurately and their sacred relics kept. The ensuing vagueness in the chain seems to be of no account.

602 622 In most types of succession whether to the name and spirit of a dead man or to his office, there are usually two or three potential heirs, and although there are certain rules of priority, it is practically never the case that there is one child known as heir to the chieftainship from birth and brought up as such, as occurs in those South African tribes in which the eldest son of the great wife must always succeed. A Bemba chief, or commoner, is succeeded by his brothers in order of age, next by his sister's children, and, failing them, by his maternal grandsons. Difficulties arise when there is a choice between an older classificatory 'brother', not a sibling, but possibly a mother's sister's son, or an even more distant 'brother' still, and a young man, a maternal nephew who is the child of the deceased's own sister, with whom, as we have seen, his ties are very close. Here the principles of primogeniture conflict with that of propinquity of kinship, in the case of a branch of a family that has been in existence for three or four generations, and it is probable that in these cases the nearest heir is appointed unless he is manifestly unsuitable, when the more distant 'brother'

[1] e.g. Bwalya Cabala, the first ancestress said to have been fetched from Lubaland by her brothers when the latter had occupied what is now Bembaland; or the Nakaasfye, grandmother of the present Nkula, who is described as having started a new line, and was evidently a woman of great character as well as the mother of many sons.

Bisa

614 616 173 associated the duty of burying the chief of the new arrivals, usually the conquering group. This fact is mentioned in a number of legends of the immigration of the Bemba and kindred tribes. The first Citimukulu, or Paramount Chief, is said to have died on the march and was buried by an old man, a member of the millet clan, whom he found in possession of a grove of trees there. A member of the millet clan is still 614 616 767 appointed as the *Shimwalule*, or hereditary burier, of the principal chiefs of the Bemba to-day, and he is still responsible for the final and most powerful rain ceremony, when the prayers of the Paramount himself have failed. The mortuary ritual of the Bemba chiefs is so complex, and there are so many hereditary officials responsible for it, that the millet clan are never described simply as the *banungwe* of the royal crocodile clan, but among the kindred Bisa tribes living in smaller groups near L. Bangweolu, we find to-day the hereditary burier of the chief always drawn from one clan and always responsible for the annual prayers for the fertility of the land, his clan definitely described as the first occupiers of the territory, and moreover as the *banungwe* of the royal clan. Thus Chief Matipa on Cilubi Island is buried by the head of the Wild Pig clan (*ngulube*) who are *banungwe* of the royal clan of that island, which is the tree clan (*ngoma*), the descendents of conquering immigrants who arrived about a century ago. This hereditary burier is in charge of the sowing and first-fruit ceremonies in this island and not the chief.

614 616 173 184 This seems to me to throw light on the original pairing of opposite clans. From the same area comes a legend of the successive settlement of two groups which suggest a possible reason why preferential marriage rights should be associated with reciprocal burial duties, or at any rate embodies the traditional native explanation of the custom. The Bisa, living under Chief Nsamba in the L. Bangweolu district say the *Bena Nkashi* (woman's clan), came up the river first to their island. Then the *Bena Mfula* (rain clan) came in canoes. They ate with the *Bena Nkashi* and started to move off. But the head of the local group said, 'Stay here. We are alone here. We 'have no women here. Let us live together.' And the newcomers agreed. So the rain clain gave the sister of their chief in marriage to the head of the woman's clan. When the latter died he had no heirs of his own to bury him, so members of the rain clan buried him. Later another